

REMARKS

This application pertains to a novel adhesive based on styrene block copolymers, which is highly stable to aging and which can be used to create a connection which can be parted again by extensive stretching in the direction of the bond plane, and its use for a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) sheet strip.

Claims 1-17 are pending; claim 17 being added by this amendment. Claim 13, as originally presented, had two periods "...", and said claim is being amended to cancel one of said periods. Claim 14 as originally presented had an errant period after the number "13", and the claim has now been amended to correct this error.

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph as the Examiner views a substantial absence of plasticizers as a critical limitation not recited in the claims. The substantial absence of plasticizers is not a critical limitation, and nowhere does the specification indicate that it would be.

At page 3, lines 23-27, in discussing the prior art, Applicant mentions that there are some applications where it is necessary to minimize or forgo the addition of plasticizers, such as those instances where the plasticizers may migrate into the substrate. This, however, does not mean that they should never be used at all! Then, on page 6, lines 22-24, Applicant indicates that plasticizers are used only in small amounts and *preferably* not used at all. This represents a preferred embodiment, but is not in any way a limitation on the scope of the invention. That the substantial absence of plasticizers is not a critical limitation; or any limitation at all, on the scope of the invention, can clearly be seen at page 6, line 29, where

plasticizers are specifically included among the blend components that can be used in the adhesive of the invention.

On the other hand, Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner having called the absence of a dependent claim directed to SBBS to Applicant's attention and has now added claim 17 for this purpose, as recommended by the Examiner.

The rejection of Claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph should accordingly now be withdrawn.

Turning now to the art rejection, Claims 1-6 and 8-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Korpman (US 4,024,312), with specific reference to the abstract, column 1, lines 27-32; column 3, lines 23-26 most particularly column 1, line 62 — column 2, line 43, particularly column 2, lines 17-29.

Applicant's claims are directed to a novel adhesive and its use. All of the language cited by the Examiner in the Korpman reference pertains to a **backing** material, not an adhesive. Moreover, neither Korpman nor the cited "Concise Encyclopedia of Polymer Science and Engineering" teach or suggest anything at all about an adhesive having a block copolymer wherein the fraction of 1,2-linked dienes are selectively hydrogenated, as required by Applicant's claims.

Korpman, whether taken alone or in combination with the Concise Encyclopedia of Polymer Science and Engineering cannot therefore in any way anticipate or suggest Applicant's claims, and the rejection of claims 1-6 and 8-13

under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Korpman (US 4,024,312) should be withdrawn.

Claims 7 and 14-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Korpman with reference also to Lühmann et al. (US 6,004,665). Nothing in either Korpman or Lühmann et al. overcomes the basic deficiencies of the Korpman reference, discussed above. The rejection of claims 7 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should accordingly now be withdrawn.

In view of the present remarks it is believed that claims 1-17 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of said claims by the Examiner is respectfully requested and the allowance thereof is courteously solicited.

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME


If any extension of time for this response is required, Applicant requests that this be considered a petition therefor. Please charge the required petition fee to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fee or credit any excess to Deposit

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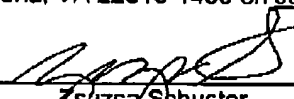
Respectfully submitted,
NORRIS, McLAUGHLIN & MARCUS, P.A.

By 
William C. Gerstenzang
Reg. No. 27,552

WCG/tmh

875 Third Avenue - 18th Floor
New York, New York 10022
(212) 808-0700

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transmitted via facsimile no. 703-872-9306
addressed to Mail Stop Amendment,
Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450,
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on July 5, 2005


Zsuzsa Schuster
Date July 5, 2005